

This week's community profile: Stangelville



Chapel chat: Vi Kraynek and Ray Selner look at a history of St. Lawrence Catholic Church commemo-

rating the Czech congregation's 125th year in 1989. The building will be 100 years old this year.

'Everyone helps everybody'

By Karil Van Boxel

Press-Gazette

STANGELVILLE — Much of what made Stangelville a booming community is gone but the friendliness remains.

That's what brought Perry Baugnet, 28, and his wife here from Green Bay two years ago.

"The people were just so friendly around here," says Baugnet, E1742 Kewaunee County J.

Press-Gazette photos by Sandee Gerbers

"Around here, everyone helps everybody."

Baugnet's neighbor is Mike Kraynek, 30, who owns Kraynek Electric, a business his grandfather started.

A single flag pole flying U.S., Wisconsin and prisoner-of-war flags marks the company's location. Two-thirds of the work is farm-related, Kraynek said.

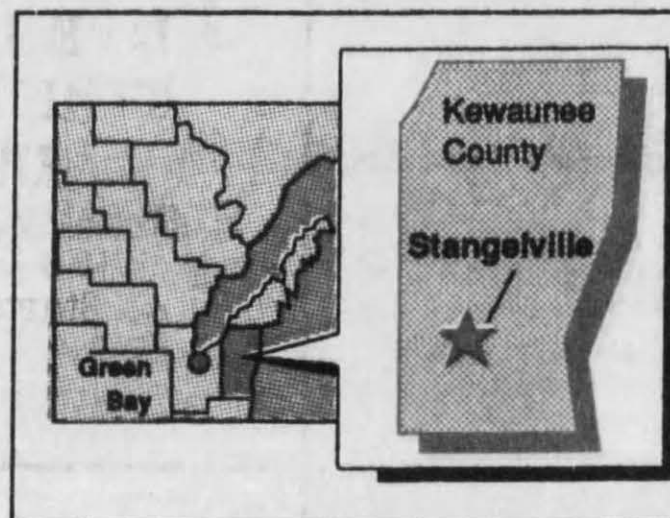
Kraynek grew up here, graduated from Kewaunee High School and worked with his dad for 12 years before taking over the business.

About the only way he'll move is if he wins the lottery, he said. Then he would consider Montana.

Stangelville is at Wisconsin 163 and Kewaunee County J about 23 miles southeast of Green Bay. Life revolves around St. Lawrence Catholic Church just as it did when the parish was established about 128 years ago.

The church will be 100 years old this year. Its building, picturesque hillside cemetery and brick rectory were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

Lifelong parishioner Raymond Selner,



The Stangelville file

- **Population:** 60.
- **Renamed:** The village of Franklin evolved after businesses were established between 1865 and 1868. Later, John, Frank and Jacob Stangel of Tisch Mills bought the tavern and store. When the post office went into the store in 1890, the brothers renamed the community Stangelville. Dairy farming was the main occupation of the Kewaunee County hamlet.

65, N2115 Kewaunee County V, Denmark, researched Czech newspapers and parish records before he wrote the application for the National Register.

His family history helped, too. His great-grandfather, Adam Selner, and grandfather Jacob came here in 1869.

The kermis — harvest festival — drew relatives home the Sunday after St. Lawrence Day (Aug. 10) when Selner was a boy.

Edward and Vi Kraynek maintain the church and live in a 13-room, 130-year-old house that once housed a school and harness shop. Firefighters hosed down the house to save it when a 1962 fire destroyed five nearby barns.

Near the church is the Konop Meat Market, where savory sausages have been made since 1910. Second-generation owner Donlyn Konop, 57, has run the business with the help of his family, one full-time employee and his brother, Albert, who retired in 1980 after 50 years.

Customers from miles around return for Konop's summer sausage, wieners and ring bologna smoked with maple

wood. About 1,000 pounds of sausage are made each week, until summer tourism boosts the volume to 4,000 pounds.

Albert Konop, 76, N2063 Wisconsin 163 and George Raisleger, 75, N1985 Wisconsin 163, grew up here.

"It was a Bohemian town, but now it's mixed," Raisleger says. "When the old people passed away, the businesses passed away."

The two said the town once had an 1800s shoe factory that employed 70, two hardware stores, four taverns, a funeral home, the grocery store that closed last fall, a barbershop, post office, cheese factory and Vi Konop's Bar, a well-known banquet hall.

But a bit of Bohemia remains up the hill at Mary's Praha (Prague) Bar. Mary Jirovetz, 73, who has returned to Czechoslovakia seven times, still tends bar.

She took over the bar in 1953 after her father Joseph died. "I always lived here. I always liked it here," she says.

■ **Next week:** County Line in Oconto County



Marketing: In left photo, Donlyn Konop watches his wife LaVerne, left, and Jeanie Christman make summer

sausage at Konop's Meat Market. Above, Albert Konop and George Raisleger discuss Stangelville's old days.